THE MAN ABOUT TOWN.

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THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

THE WORLD! What World? Is it the World of the Æons and the Epochs, which out of Chaos became Kosmos, but will require much further application of cosmetics before it is made—as we always expect it one day will be made—"beautiful for ever"?

Is it the Geologist World, which began its stratification before Time was, and will continue to stratify until Time shall be no more?

Is it the Astronomy World among the World, whose next door neighbour, according to the reckoning of neighbourhood among the Chinese, is just near enough to exchange light-rays in five years and a-half as shown by the latest and correctest computation?

Is it—but we we will not pursue queries which might be multiplied indefinitely. Our World is the World of to-day, with a vivid and not unpleasant reminiscence of yesterday, with a keen and not unhappy anticipation of to-morrow.

But our World of to-day means much more than it meant formerly. Only a few years ago, comparatively speaking, to-day was limited to a London circle of a very small radius, including only the Houses of Parliament (in Session time), the Law Courts (*ideo*), and some other houses scattered about where gossip was largely manufactured and dealt in, wholesale, retail, and for exportation. All beyond, even in the metropolis, belonged to yesterday; beyond that, again, to the day before. Across the channel to-day was to-day week—a fortnight, as the case might be; and the weeks become months on crossing the ocean. The man who received news on a September day of his friend's safe arrival in Calcutta could remember parting with him on the deck of the Indiaman in January, and thought the voyage must have been unusually rapid.

Now all this is changed. To-day the Duke of Argyle in London can send instructions to Lord Mayo in Calcutta, and learn that his despatch has been duly received before the close of office hours. On running against the sun the difference is still more curious. The result of the race was known in New York on the memorable 14th by 2 p.m. "local time" though the race itself was not commenced until past 5 p.m., Greenwich time.

This is the World to which we belong. It is "the great globe itself"—*totus, teres, atque rotundus*. We know well how solemn are its duties, how vast are its activities, and how tragic are too many of its scenes. But our chief concern will be with those lighter, brighter, and fresher sayings and doings which furnish the comedy of life, and without which, in due measure and proportion, life would almost entirely lose its healthy flow and activity.

The "largest circulation in the world" is that of the British sovereign. It beats that of the penny or halfpenny papers out-and-out. When they count thousands it can reckon up millions, and it passes without translation, opposition, or even censorship into all countries, whatever may be their language or political organisation. It is in every sense of the word world-wide. Such a vast circulation betokens a corresponding success, and with such prodigious success what course would appear more obvious than that it should be allowed to go on succeeding without disturbance. When anything is already so wonderfully "well," surely it ought to be "let alone." But the present official manager of this prosperous concern threatens it with a very serious measure of disturbance. The question arises thus: huge quantities of raw or "bar" gold are every year sent to the London Mint to be coined into sovereigns. The operation, of course, involves considerable expense. It must be performed with infinite care and exactitude, and under highly-trained and scientific superintendence. Then there is the cost of melting, and some lost by waste, and all these put together form an item amounting to a good many thousands, which under present arrangements the British taxpayer provides, while the bullion merchant enjoys the benefit, for his gold is returned to him in coin at full weight, with no charge whatever for coinage.

Now, Mr. Lowe says this is unfair to the taxpayer, and he has proposed it as a problem for the recess to determine how this charge shall be removed from the public shoulders, whether by returning to the bullion dealer the usual tale of sovereigns, but each of them containing a grain and a-half less gold, or by simply charging 2d. or so on each coin, as representing "mintage," or how otherwise. To this query answers voluminous in extent and distracting in their contrariety have already been given. And these come not from the annual herd of anonymous correspondents whose letters fill the gaping columns of our daily newspapers in the "silly season," but from pundits in monetary science, from directors of the Bank of England, from Parliament men and other high authorities who have spoken, written, or legislated upon financial questions for many years past. The dust and the clamour, the contradictions and the perplexities which these learned "experts," as they all claim to be, have raised around the question baffle description. Into this controversy we do not care to enter. When so many doctors differ we will not intrude an opinion. But on condition we must insist upon. However, the question of cost and charges may be settled, the Mint must not retrench, even by the hundredth of a grain from the customary weight or value of the sovereign. That coin travels largely abroad, very much of it in the pockets of travellers. It is in their name we speak. Commerce can and does take care of itself, but the traveller, ignorant, hurried, and occasionally feminine, is almost always helpless. It will never do to let foreigners find the least ground to suspect that the London Mint is issuing a depreciated currency, that the English Government are re-introducing the old abuse of "sweating" their own coin. The traveller as it is has difficulties enough to contend with and afford sufficient openings for overcharge, not to say opportunity for swindling. We must not add any doubt respecting the value of the sterling coin he proffers to the other perplexities which surround his dealings with the foreign landlord. The character of the sovereign must be above suspicion.

The connection between Health and Wealth is of long standing. Just now the phrase has attained a new meaning and still wider significance—since upon the health of one man the wealth of half the civilised world may be said to depend. The Emperor of the French has been ill, and all the Bourses in Europe have been smitten with panic. The process began in Paris, but rapidly travelled the whole round, from Petersburg to Berlin, London, Madrid, Florence, Vienna, Constantinople, and even east of Europe to Alexandria. The electric circuit was complete. Every market declined more or less, even the "less" being considerable, while in special cases the "more" was very serious indeed. And the worst is that no one can learn the truth of the matter. The few who know keep careful silence, or if they speak, tell "the other thing." On the Bourse there appeared daily a flight of "canards," whose proprietors seem to find their brood profitable. The unofficial papers reproduce such of these rumours as they severally believe probable, or safe, while the *Journal Officiel* issues bulletins which every reader—not to put too fine a point on it—at once sets down as "shams." Meantime the Parisian public have made up their minds that seeing is the only believing, and will credit no account of the Imperial convalescence until the Emperor is actually seen taking his "promenade" on the Boulevard, or in the *Bois*, or better still in the camp at Châlons—where, according to the last advices, there is still retained some expectation that His Majesty may even yet be able to appear.

The death of General Perronet Thompson, at the patriarchial age of 86, ought not to be passed over without a word of remark. In political, as in some other circles, the members may be distributed among three classes. There are the Notabilities, the Celebrities, and the Powers. General Thompson never passed beyond the first class. Yet as the author of the *Corn Law Catechism* he performed a work which produced very important consequences, and was the engineer who fired the train. If that memorable *brochure* had never been written—or been otherwise written—it is not too much to say that the Corn Laws would have lingered some years longer than they did upon the Statute Book.

And *après?* Why we should know so little of Cobden; there would have been no commercial treaty with France; Bright would never have become a Cabinet Minister; Peel would have continued to lead the Conservatives; Disraeli would have lost his "mission;" and poor Lord George Bentinck, whom politics so prematurely killed, might to-day have had in training the winner of the "blue riband of the Turf" in 1870!

Among the advertisements of the week, there has more than once appeared a most urgent appeal to "Honesty" to make an immediate appointment with "H. B." Now, if not only H. B., but all the rest of the initials could be persuaded to make and keep an appointment with Honesty, how much better the world would become! Yet the result would have its alarming side, for if Shakespeare is right—and when is he ever wrong?—then must "Doomsday be near."

THE MAN ABROAD.

Paris, 9th Sept., 1869.

THE Emperor's health still continues the all-absorbing topic of the Boulevards, and the conflicting accounts that hourly appear in the official and semi-official papers are only to be accounted for by the total absence of any other interesting news at this most dull season. Despite all assertions to the contrary, there is the assurance, from the most reliable source, that His Majesty is really progressing, though slowly, the sudden and violent atmospheric changes having alone retarded his much-to-be-desired convalescence. Yesterday the Emperor, accompanied by General Fleury, took a walk in the Park of St. Cloud. M. Duvergier arriving with the decree for the closing of the Senate, a pen and ink were sent for, and His Majesty signed the document in the park. It is barely probable that His Majesty may be enabled to accomplish the proposed and desired visit to the Camp at Chalons, where his presence is so impatiently awaited. *En attendant*, his favourite charger Solferino, who bore his Imperial master through the whole of the Italian campaign, is daily promenaded through the camp, to the delight and admiration of the soldiers, and by his presence doubtless awakens visions of past glory and expectant distributions of medals and ribbons in the veteran *piou-piou's* breast. The Pavilion de l'Empereur has been magnificently prepared for his reception, and everything throughout the Camp betokens the anxiety and impatience with which the arrival of His Majesty is awaited.

The Empress, who appears in no way to have suffered from the fatigue of her Corsican trip, has expressed her satisfaction at the great enthusiasm with which both herself and the Prince Imperial were everywhere welcomed throughout their journey. The constant demand for ceremonial changes of toilette called forth the inventive faculties of Her Majesty, who improvised a special car for the purpose, which was fitted with every necessary requirement for Beauty's adornment that Paris could supply, thus enabling the Empress to change her costume between the various stations. There is little probability of the journey to Constantinople being accomplished, though Her Majesty has by no means abandoned the project she has all along been so desirous of carrying out, but which now must totally depend upon the improvement during the next month or six weeks in the Emperor's health. The visit to

Fontainbleau is relinquished for this year, owing to which the Compiegne season will be advanced, and the issuing the invitations for the first series of visitors has been arranged.

The Marquis of Hertford, whose long and tedious illness had latterly taken a more hopeful turn, has had a relapse, and is now lying very ill at his beautiful house at Bagatelle, where the Emperor and Empress send daily to make inquiries.

Dull and deserted as are the Boulevards and Bois, the theatres appear to have little cause of complaint, the revival of the old fairy piece *La Poudre de Perlinpinpin* at the Chatelet, and *On Demande des Ingénues* at the Palais Royale being the two principal attractions, and are nightly presented to well-filled houses, and despite the mid-African heat of the last few evenings. The open-air concerts in the Champs Elysées are still the favourite resort of the *bourgeoisie* of Paris, and the *cafés chantants* are reaping their "*recolte*." *Apropos* of the latter, there is rather a good story of Henri Calonna in a new paper, *La Gazette Française*. Two *sous*-less students of *the* Quartier Latin are lounging by Le Pavilion Henri Quatre. X. hums the refrain that the "Trouvere" of the place is bawling from the boards. "Ah, mon ami," exclaims Z. with rapture," what a voice you have. Why, you've cent mille francs dans le gosier" (four thousand pounds in your throat). "Alas!" replies X., with a sigh, "would that I could cracher cent sous [spit up five francs]; we should then be able to have a supper to-night." Sunday being a wet day, proved disastrous to the *restaurants*, who speculate upon their success at the *Fete des Loges*, which is held at this season of the year in the picturesque forest of St. Germain, and is the great resort of the lovers of pic-nic pleasures of the Paris population, who regale themselves till midnight, amid all the noise of firing and fire-works, gongs, trumpets, and discordant bellowings of saltimbanques and showmen (unfailing accompaniments of a French fair), upon roast hares and chickens, cooked before large fires in the open air.

A *môt* of the late Comte Alfred de Vigny, Membre d'Institut and author of *Cinq Mars* &c., &c., is worth recalling, it having the twofold charm of being little known and authentic. During the exile and residence of the present Emperor—then Prince Louis Napoleon—in England, he was invited by the late Duke of Wellington to dinner at Apsley House, accompanied by his friend Persigny and Doctor Couneau. To meet the Prince were also invited Alfred de Vigny, M. de Rivière (afterwards Prêfet of La Charente), and some few others. After the dinner, and just before leaving the table, the Duke, filling a glass of wine, turned to the Prince Louis Napoleon and said—"Prince, I have great pleasure in drinking to your health." The Prince thereupon bowed, and, filling his own glass, rose from his chair and said—"Duke, I thank you—and while it is impossible for me by words to express to you my appreciation of the magnificent hospitality you have offered to us this day, and which I cannot possibly expect to imitate in England, I trust the hour is not far distant when I may hope to rival it in France by receiving you as my guest at the Tuilleries." The astonishment of the guests may be imagined at the boldness of this princely aspiration; and upon their leaving the table, and while coffee was being handed round, De Vigny, who was a known Royalist, loudly remarked to Persigny—"Is your friend a fool or a madman to have made such an observation before us, and in such a house?" Years after, Prince Louis Napoleon had become Emperor, Persigny Prime Minister, De Rivière Prêfet of La Charente, and Alfred de Vigny nominated for a seat in the Academy, before occupying which it was necessary he should be presented to the Emperor by the Prefect of his departement, which happened to be La Charente. Accordingly, De Vigny and M. de Rivière were waiting the arrival of His Majesty in one of the State apartments of the Tuilleries, when the doors were suddenly thrown open, and the Emperor, accompanied by M. de Persigny, walked straight up to De Vigny and said—"Eh bien, De Vigny, vous voyez que moi aussi, j'ai fait des romans historiques," upon which Alfred de Vigny, perfectly unabashed and profoundly bowing, replied—"Pardon, Sire, pas des romans, mais une Iliade."

Fargueil—who, like the clever Duchesse de Gérolstein, old Time seems to be frightened at—has reappeared at the Vaudeville—the scene of so many of her triumphs—and is nightly resuming her charming representation of "Miss Multon" in the *comédie* of that name.

THE MAN IN THE STALLS.

IN casting about for materials for a column or two of comment on the dramatic doings of the day we find ourselves, without any compromise, face to face with *Formosa*. With this lioness in the path it is useless to attempt to turn to the right or the left. There is so little new, so little true, and what there is of either, perhaps, so little signifies, that the disposal somehow of this obtrusive Girl of the Period becomes an act of necessity as well as of justice. As the expression of our opinion on the question involved in the controversy which has recently shaken the proscenium to its foundations may serve in some sort as a confession of our dramatic faith, we have the less hesitation in commencing our duties with the consideration of a topic not altogether in its *première jeunesse*.

The production of *The Railroad to Ruin*, and the publication of the controversy it provoked, must be too fresh in public recollection to render any lengthened allusion to them necessary. We will assume our readers to be thoroughly familiar with both, and simply proceed to state, so far as in us lies, our opinion of the merits of the play, its probable influence on the morality of the stage, and the reasons why pieces of its class are more in favour with the play-going public at large than *King Lear*, *The School for Scandal*, or *The Wife's Secret*.

Formosa is, it need scarcely be told, an aquatic *Flying Scud*, a description which the household character of Mr. Boucicault's popularity may justify and explain. In it he has selected a subject of national interest for dramatic treatment, contriving, with his usual knowledge of stage effect, to present a series of pictures of everyday life which all will recognise, and types of character with which all are more or less familiar. The University Boat Race is, next to the Derby, the event which is, May meetings and archæological gatherings to the contrary notwithstanding, the object of deeper interest to the average Englishman than almost any other event of the year, and which, if it can be made the centre round which a properly constructed plot can be made to revolve, is a perfectly legitimate and eligible subject for a drama of the class to which Mr. Boucicault has of late given his attention. Looking at the result in a practical way, quite apart from its æsthetic aspect, we cannot, sundry and divers incongruities and inaccuracies notwithstanding, but consider that the plain act of dramatising has been well done. The plot in all its main essentials is interesting, the situations (we do not speak of their probability or possibility) are telling, the dialogue is fairly neat, effective, and natural. We are as jealous for the honour of Oxford as any can be, but really to visit Mr. Boucicault's sins of assigning the coaching of the 'Varsity eight to an ex-prizefighter, of permitting its stroke to train in a villa at Fulham, and its crew to wander about in flannels at abnormal hours in the Haymarket, by calling his play "dull" is hardly fair. *Formosa* is full of technical inaccuracies, but people do not go to sleep over it. To the objection that its hero, Tom Burroughs, is an insult to the University and an affront to the youth of the period and humanity at large, we must take more decided exception. Tom Burroughs is not a wise, not a virtuous, nor even a commonly prudent young man. But with all our veneration for Brasenose and Balliol, we have yet to learn that these renowned colleges turn out nothing but noble exemplars of piety and learning. Tom Burroughs is, there is no concealing or denying it, a common type of an amiable, weak-minded, athletic, sensual son of Alma Mater—a type which no one, we apprehend, will care to assert is yet extinct in those venerable halls of learning. The career shadowed forth for him by the dramatist, is, we venture to say, *in essentials*, by no means incompatible with the probable course of events: given a Jenny, a Nelly, a Compton Kerr, and a Major Jorum, there will always be plenty of Tom Burroughs ready and willing to play the part Mr. Boucicault has assigned him. The truthfulness or tendency of the other virtuous (tolerably) members of the cast have not been seriously attacked, and need little defence. But we may safely say that the uprightness of a retired ring-man like Boker, the occasional *lapses* into virtue like those occurring to his daughter, and the "combinations" of gentlemen like Kerr and Jorum will be set down as neither impossible nor improbable, except by those who know nothing of the matter.

We come now to the second and graver charge against the work under consideration, its professed "immorality," or as we have put it, its alleged injurious influence on the morality of the stage. Interwoven with the boat-race element of the plot of *Formosa* runs, there need hardly be stated, an important thread which very much affects the pattern of the piece, and from which it takes its title. It is the influence of a courtesan which nearly ruins Tom Burroughs, compromises his honour, and, according to the curious theory laid down, imperils the contest itself, upon which the curtain falls. It may be thought odd that the successors of audiences which sat undismayed through the broad indecency of much of the Elizabethan drama, and the refined filth of the comic dramatists of the Restoration, and the present enjoyers of the far more dangerous licentiousness of the modern French school and its adapters, should turn and rend Mr. Boucicault in these days. Setting aside the Italian stage as a Utopia from which no evil and little good, dramatically, is to be gathered, it can hardly be contested that both England and France in both past and present times, have placed on the boards characters incalculably more demoralising than Miss Jenny Boker. Indeed, the accusation seems to rest not so much on the treatment as the *production* of such a personage before the footlights. In the pure air of modern society it appears to have been held an affront to hint at the existence of such "creatures" as Formosa, whose conduct, as compared with the unfaithful wives and demoniacal prostitutes of the earlier English and later French school, is simply celestial. Dramatists of all ages have made free and exciting use of the peculiar form of vice of which Miss Boker is an exponent, even to introducing, as Ben Jonson did, the plain old English equivalent in his titles. The "professional element" was duly recognised by Shakspeare, and allusions, occasionally of the grossest, are scattered freely throughout his plays, in which Doll Tearsheet, Nell, and their compeers occupy the subordinate positions they held in the social life of the day. Had Doll Tearsheet played the part in London that Brittles did or Table Bay does, would the great dramatist have painted them as he did?

But this may be considered, possibly is, irrelevant to the matter at issue. It will not suffice to prove Mr. Boucicault no worse than other dramatists, nor even to show, if it were possible, that Shakspeare himself might, under similar conditions, have followed the course he invariably adopted in *telling the truth*. But it is something to show that the exhibition of Nancy Dawson and her prototypes on the stage is no new thing. All we contend is that it was the absence of the evil in its present form which explains the absence of its representation on the stage. Upon the probable effect of the picture of the villa at Fulham, Miss Boker's auricomus fluid, jewels, and card-parties on the morals of the house, it is, of course, not easy to dogmatise. It is possible that the unthinking or viciously-disposed of the other sex may, when they look at the adornments which surround *Formosa* at Drury Lane, feel something of the same envy of the counterfeit as they do of the original whom they see in Regent-street, or who is, peradventure, criticising Miss Rodgers's performance from a conspicuous private box. But it is long odds that the acute feminine eye will be more impressed by the reality than the counterfeit, and that a "glance" at those "loose boxes" in which Baby So-and-So reclines with a bevy of some of the best known names in town round her, will exercise a more lasting impression on her mind than Formosa and her theatrical finery, booby lover, and general anxieties. The specious rewards held out to the successful in her dreadful trade, the social success, the admiration and

companionship of the great, the jewels, dresses, ponies, bonnets, Louis Quinze shoes, and all the decorations of their order, are brought too vividly before the "poor dressmaker" in real life, for her to accept the glittering surroundings of Formosa as a revelation. Table Bays do not hide their light under a bushel. If Mr. Boucicault had drawn Formosa as it has been urged he should have done, in a garret, squalidly dressed, scantily fed, and devoured by remorse, he would have pictured a lie of which the smallest parlour-maid in the gallery would have grinned contemptuous disbelief. The most plausible charge in the whole indictment is one which is as old as the hills, but which has certainly an element of truth in it. It is said, and not untruly, that vice is made rather too agreeable in the *Railroad to Ruin*, that justice has not been meted out to *Formosa* as her shortcomings deserve. It is not probable, however, that very many, except of the weakest, will come to the conclusion that Jenny Boker's career, amid all her fiery and exciting "distractions" was a happy one, and there will be a large proportion of the spectators capable of seeing that being forced to become the accomplice of scoundrels in a plot against a man she—well, had a fancy for, compelled to deceive the father mother whom she loved, and be within an ace of breaking their hearts, was not altogether a *rôle* to be envied. To the end of her career, even as at first arranged, we are not disposed to attach much importance. It is useless, after investing vice with attractive qualities through four acts, to wrap it in a sheet and place a candle in its hand during the fifth. Had Mr. Boucicault contrived that his heroine should have been hung or transported before the fall of the curtain, it would have alienated the sympathies of none of those who had seen her in her prosperity. Having created *Formosa*, Mr. Boucicault was bound to see her to a natural and fairly probable end. Of how common an exit from such a life is marriage to a donkey no one who knows the world need be reminded.

Finally, what is the reason that pieces of the class of *Formosa* draw crowded houses, while representations of Shakspeare, Byron, Sheridan (with and without Knowles), Westland Marston, and other "legitimists," are comparatively neglected? We fancy, first, because the former are new; secondly, because they reflect the social life of the day. We all know well enough that the 'Varsity eight do not practice on a form, are not coached by Nat Langham, and do not storm spunging-houses in aquatic costume if their stroke happens to be locked up by Mr. Melchisedech. But everybody goes to see the University Boat Race, everybody knows Table Bay by sight, everybody is aware of the existence of such persons as Captain Kerr and Major Jorum, and everybody is acquainted with Fulham, Putney, and Bream's-buildings—or its equivalent. We hold that there is deep wisdom in that apparently paradoxical canon of Charles Lamb's, that Shakspeare is unfitted for stage representation. We cannot see in the *School for Scandal* or *The Wife's Secret* that reflex of *things as they are*, of which, to our thinking, the stage should be the mirror. And for these and the other reasons we have imperfectly and inadequately set forth, we consider that Mr. Boucicault has done good service in placing before the world a picture, exaggerated and inaccurate in some respects though it be, of lifeas it is in the nineteenth century.

The dramatic notes of the week may be briefly summarised. After a brief interval, necessary alike for the renovation of house and inmates, the Prince of Wales's re-opens this evening with the ever fresh and delightful *School*. Considering that the company has not had even a half-holiday for 192 nights, it thoroughly deserved the brief period of relaxation it has taken. *Lost at Sea*, the new drama by Messrs. Boucicault and Byron, will be found at the Adelphi on the 15th. The Princess's will rely on Mr. Boucicault alone for the winter attraction with which it re-opens on the 20th. On Saturday, the 18th, the Globe will join the list with a new monosyllabic comedy called *Progress*, one of the great *Caste* family, and on the 25th the Holborn uncloses for the performance of "the highest class of dramatic literature." Miss Bouverie will repeat her pleasant drawing-room scenes in costume next month, and that is, we believe all, as the ladies say in the shops, "at present."

THE MAN IN THE STREET.

Dr. Cumming leaves town next week. The reverend gentleman expects to have good sport among the red-legged ones. A battery of canons accompanies the doctor.

The defeat of the Harvard crew is attributed to their want of "catch and quick recovery." If this be the case, a mild attack of measles would not be a bad preparation for their next match.

The greatest *Echo*-nomy in literature is clearly an evening paper for a halfpenny.

The opinion of the leading crossings is in favour of Royal Oak winning the Leger. It would be quite in the eternal fitness of things if he and Pretender, each belonging to a Scot, both Stuarts, one an Adventurer, the other a Gamester, should run first and second. But as the Scotch say, "A' Stuarts are na sib to the King."

Talking of Blue Ribands reminds me of Garters. It is said, I know not how truly, that when the news of "Garter's" death reached 82 in the Quadrant, an amateur inquired "if he had starred one?" More pertinent was the reflection of a City man who, on the same occasion, observed—"Look out for a fall in stocks."

On the River.

OXFORD v. HARVARD.

THE question which has been asked, "Why did Harvard lose the race?" is a most notable example of the art of putting things. The question that ought to be put is rather this, "Why should Harvard win?" England is an old country, while America is modern. Oxford, too, is the oldest university in the United Kingdom, and racing is one of its old institutions. The various steps a man must pass through before getting into the "'Varsity Eight" are sufficient to insure his being a good man. From the time he enters Eton till he leaves Oxford there is always some one on the watch to seize upon rising talent, and so, by natural selection and otherwise, the struggle for the distinction is most severe. Something of this sort may, for aught we know, be going on in America up to a certain point. But supposing the eight made up, what test is there of their being good, bad, or indifferent? The only competition is between Harvard and Yale, and probably a very indifferent crew might be the winner. At Oxford there is the annual competition with Cambridge in an eight-oared race. Then comes Henley with its eights, fours, and pairs, open to all amateurs. If beating Cambridge is not sufficient, there is a chopping-block in the shape of the London Rowing Club; and a scratch crew of Oxonians is usually got together to prevent the Grand Challenge going to Putney. All this goes to show that the Oxford Eight ought to be a good crew and rather difficult to beat. In the present case there was a yet further selection—the best four out of the best eight. And we may say that a better choice could not have been made. Darbishire is a splendid stroke, Tinné and Yarborough are two gentlemen who never know when to cry enough, and Willan, whose round back has been remarked upon by those who prefer form to pace and last, pulled as hard as anyone in the boat. The coaching by Mr. Morrison, moreover, is not to be left out of account. Our opinion is that there ought to be a statue of Mr. G. Morrison erected on the river bank at Oxford to commemorate what he has done for his University. But it must be confessed that lately he has uttered some very strange things. At the last Oxford and Cambridge dinner he is reported to have said that Goldie, the Cambridge stroke, was a better man than there was at Oxford. Now, considering that Mr. G. Morrison inculcates "catch," and that Goldie has none—that the whole Cambridge Crew were given to bucket forward and to get too far back—we say it is not a little singular how such pulling could have the stamp of Mr. Morrison's approval. For our part, we believe he has taught Oxford the right stroke, and we hope they may never lose it, and further that they may always have as good a man as Darbishire to set it them. The race is easily described. Oxford won because they had a better crew. Harvard led a considerable distance through rowing four to five strokes a minute more than Oxford. But the Oxford stroke could be kept up longer than that of Harvard, and could take a boat faster from Putney to Mortlake. In our opinion the Harvard crew would have made a very good race indeed with a Cambridge or London four. They pulled a good deal in the same style and with admirable pluck. They came over here, not, we believe, in the expectation of winning, but only to get a greater interest taken in rowing in their country. This object it is to be hoped they may attain. They have done all to deserve success, but we do not fancy they will ever get the Yankee mind to be anything like so enthusiastic over a University race as is the case in this country. There are many causes to operate against it: they have no traditions; there is nothing to enlist a man's affections for Harvard as there is for Oxford. The case of the Turf in America is in point. Although so thoroughly English, as to be carried everywhere in the train of English colonisation, the Turf has never taken root in America. Trotting matches seem to be the only races they care for. We should think that when first the Harvard Crew came to England they must have wished most devoutly they were back again. They came over to race Oxford—a University. They were forthwith challenged by the London Rowing Club, with their usual good taste, to row them—a club with scarcely a University man among its members. If Harvard had accepted, there are at least half a dozen clubs with equal right at least to challenge. The Leander Club is almost entirely composed of old 'Varsity oars. Then notably there is the Kingston Club, which, when it did make up its mind to go in for business, and to give up training on ducks and green peas, proceeded to demolish the L. R. C. at Henley. Then there are the redoubtable Oscillators, who twice beat the best four that the London could bring against them; and this very season they have had to cry *peccavi* to a crew of Eton "Boys." The history of the Grand Challenge at Henley for the last ten years we think had better not be opened by the L. R. C. About the dinner not much need be said. Why the L. R. C. were the hosts we do not quite see; nor why Mr. Charles Dickens was called upon for the speech of the evening. Was it on account of his knowledge of acquatics, or of his American sympathies? If the latter, why not have asked Mr. John Bright, Unsworth, or any other man? Possibly the right president on the occasion would have been Mr. Dion Boucicault, whose marvellous disclosures of Oxford life and manners have taken the town by storm. Our own idea is that Oxford should have managed somehow to have entertained their opponents at Oxford; the time of year, however, was against it, and the result was a rather flat entertainment. One pleasant reflection is that the course was kept well nearly the whole of the way, and that the better crew won. But this, it appears, was by great good luck. One individual obtained the only notoriety he is ever likely to get, by pulling across the Oxford boat at the close of the race. A person who does a thing of that sort should be dealt with in a manner understood better in Turkey than the United Kingdom. The other mistake which might have proved fatal was the mooring of the flag-boat. This, the most important point in the course, seems to have been but little thought of; but will be more considered, we trust, on a future occasion. The result of the race justified the opinion of all amateurs, but was a facer to the "professionals." "The Man on the River" is not much given to moralize; but we think that two morals may be drawn from the race in question: the first, that professionals know nothing about amateur rowing; the second, that it is never three to one about a boat-race.

THE MAN ABOUT TOWN.

I TRUST no reader will construe my dispensing with the preface or exordium common to undertakings of this nature, into disrespect for a class which I never felt so disposed to honour in my life. Next to an ADVERTISER, before whom I should inevitably crumble my bread with both hands, a Reader represents to me the most Il—str—s of P-rs-n-g-s, whose lightest wish is to be heard and obeyed as though in an Eastern as well as a West-Central point of view he were Commander of his Faithful Servant. In his interest, no less than my own, I have suppressed the "Few First Words," compared with most of which the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment* is historical, and *Boocow on the Gizzard* amusing.

I believe that not one reader in a hundred is up to commencing such a study, nor one in a thousand capable of enduring to the end. If he be, you may be sure that of that man you have made an implacable enemy. The fact of his having won such a trial would have proved his possession of no ordinary resolution, patience, and tenacity of purpose. He would not be a man likely to forget or forgive. He would probably brood over an injury until it was avenged, and treasure up a wrong, to be requited tenfold in the fulness of time. And in six months that man, with a sheaf of unfulfilled pledges—dishonoured little bills—in his hand, and the memory of having been made to suffer by reading them in virgin long primer, would be a pleasant creature to meet in print or in private. No: I want to keep readers as well as to make them; and so, instead of promising and vowing like an unfairylike godmother, or even bowing with stately ceremonial to those with whom I want to be on familiar terms, I will just take my reader by the button-hole, and talk as if we had known one another all our lives.

And first I must confess, in that spirit of frankness which will, I trust, always characterise our relations, that I had rather be doing almost anything else than addressing the aforesaid reader from my present coign of disadvantage. It is a hard thing when the world and his wife—the latter especially—is at play in the open, when even *School* is shut up, *Formosa* is having a run, and every one is either *Among the Breakers* or with the *Seagulls*, to be compelled to abide in this city of tombs. I have, for my sins, passed many Septembers in town, but I recollect few comparable to this in suicidal tendencies. I fancy Mr. Boucicault would be puzzled to find, in a capitation sense, his three millions. They certainly do not congregate in any known place of resort. Owls might breed, as they have walked, unmolested in Regent-street; Pelicans might stalk in dignified seclusion up Piccadilly and through the Burlington Arcade. The park, which already lies thick in brown leaves, 500 for sixpence, is given over to dirty Sleeping Beauties in the Wood and loafing Riquets in the Tuft, who read *Lloyd's* and smoke pipes unmolested. Everyone with anything (except dogs) to sell is civil, while cabmen are positively courteous. A thoroughbred man and a well-dressed chestnut—I mean the reverse—took me half a mile yesterday for a shilling without a murmur, and would have "done it again," as Miss Glitters would say, for the same money. Town may be full, in the *Formosa* sense, but there is little evidence to the naked eye of the fact. The girl of the period (who, with her comb-like bonnet, feathery plumage, protruding *panier*, high heels, and awkward gait, is the image of a cock,) has deserted the scene of her triumphs, and left town to decorum and to me. I am happy to say that I am on the best of terms with my companion.

And this reminds me that I have to thank several of those remarkable gentlemen, the London Correspondents of the Provincial Press, for the publicity they have been good enough to give to the title of this journal. The quantity and —to put it mildly—peculiarity of the intelligence furnished by these industrious and imaginative persons for a guinea has long been the subject of my respectful admiration. The bold dissemination of news, which is news indeed to those out of their immediate circle, is worthy of all praise, the inventive genius displayed in the concoction of new and elaboration of old topics being, "to say the least of it, remarkable." That they have discovered that the "style" of "The Man about Town" shadows forth a dark career of profligacy, and a general violation of the commandments, is not at all wonderful in the chroniclers of the gigantic gooseberry. The exigencies of building columns without foundation and with nothing on the top must be respected, and if the architect had even gone so far as to identify me with the lady

> "Much given to flirting and dressing in scarlet,"

I should not have greatly marvelled. But I did become filled with mild wonder when I read that this paper promised to follow in the footsteps of something (name unknown) which had been "overdone and badly overdone." It is not probable that any human being ever has been, or ever will be, even remotely influenced by the purveyor of exclusive information to the *Boobyville Dustpan* (with which is incorporated the *Midland and Western Counties Sink*), but it is curious, even in this dull time, that he should go out of his way to make so comically groundless an assertion. But I am equally obliged to him for his advertisement—the only portion of his paragraph which will, in all probability, be remembered beyond "the date of publication."

"Guess, reader," inquires Southey in the *Doctor*, "where I once saw a full-sized figure of Fame, resplendent in gilding and colours, draped, erect, on tiptoe, and about to proclaim immortal truths to the world with golden trumpet? It was over a shop in the Tottenham-court-road, and announced that Mr. So-and-So fitted up water-closets on a new and improved principle. And lucky for Fame," added the laureate, "if she had never been the means of disseminating anything worse." Where do my readers think I saw, last week, a counterfeit presentment of an antique Roman, virile toga, jewelled bulla, and chaplet of bays, with blue ribbon complete? Why, over the announcement that the Great Vance would give a farewell concert somewhere, and sing "The Chickaleary Bloke" and other of his most admired songs at half-a-guinea a-head. Being more of a Dane than an antique Roman, I do not greatly sympathise with Balbus or Caius in the prostitution of their wearing apparel; but I do think the civic crown might have been more fitly bestowed. The good Peabody was content to be immortalised in his habit as he lived; surely a good, loud thunder-and-lightning suit would be the wear for the Great Vance.

The Byron scandal is still the topic of the day both on this, and, I believe, on the other side of the Atlantic. The deeply-to-be-regretted publication of Mrs. Stowe's "Recollections" in *Macmillan's Magazine* has excited the utmost horror and indignation even among those who believe Byron to be one of the most dangerous of poets, and one of the worst of men. True or untrue, it is felt, I think justly, that the relation of such matters, at such a time, and by an unauthorised person, is a cruel wrong to the dead, and no possible benefit to the living. The first conclusion, hastily arrived at, that there must be some tangible ground for such a charge, is gradually giving place to a belief that the whole accusation is the fruit of diseased imagination and imperfect recollection. The mass of correspondence to which the matter has given rise, has not, with the exception of Lord Lindsay's contribution, been of any very great value or interest; but the letter of Lady Byron to Lady Anne Barnard appears to me to have a direct and important hearing in the case. As the whole subject will be treated in another place, I need say no more, except to avow my entire disbelief in the truth of a charge which would blast even what fair fame remains to one of whom, with all his faults, England cannot but be proud.

From all sides—I trust I am not encroaching on the province of The Man Abroad—I hear appetising accounts of the brilliancy of the season at the German watering-places. With an inexhaustible purse, good health, no system, plenty of pleasant companions, and a disregard for the future, Baden would probably come nearer one's notion of an earthly paradise than even the spot immortalised in Moore's graceful verse. The exquisite natural beauties of the place, its fresh air, and careless gaiety make it one of the very few locations on earth where *ennui* is impossible. Bad temper, when the red comes up instead of the black, remorse, even despair are quite compatible with the glories of the scene; but no one is "hipped"—not even the haw-haws—in the valley of the Oos. Homburg has a more bracing air, a purer atmosphere—in both senses—fewer Formosæ, and a fairer table; but it lacks the natural charms of Baden, and has no races in the Black Forest. Wiesbaden is hot, and compared with the other two, "bad style"; Ems is "awfully" select, but hotter than anything without a spoon in it I ever experienced. Schlangenbad, the Serpentine, and Schwalbach the long, are the resort of invalids, and though at the former it is said that *on devient absolument amoureux de soi-meme*, there is little fancying oneself in time o sickness. No, for the rich, strong, and careless, Baden is the goal. Except that after a month at the Stephanienbad one does not go back to Tooting with an equal mind.

London Lyrics.

No. I.

LADY GWENDOLINE.

OF pure descent without a stain,
And long historic line,
A filly of the purest strain
Was Lady Gwendoline.

Her tree, it was affirmed, had graced
The world before the Flood;
In every feature could be traced
The attributes of Blood.

Such haughty eyes, such curling lips,
And such a snubbing nose;
Sangre azul to the very tips
Of her distinguished toes.

By the mere magic of her look
She daunted every one;
She has been known to quench a cook,
And overawe a dun.

Her butler's kerseymeres she rent
By her imperious air,
And into strong convulsions sent
The maid who did her hair.

The tradesmen, when her will was known,
Did homage in the dust;
Her joints were always free from bone,
Her crummy ones all crust.

Of suitors she'd a countless throng,
But led them such a life,
You'd think they'd asked her something wrong,
Instead of for a wife.

She scoffed at all, she struck at some
Who sought to make a match;
She drove a clergyman to rum,
A peer to Colney Hatch.

Yet Gwendoline, to quote from *Ruff*,
Was not a "maiden mare";
Her heart was made of softer stuff
Than she was well aware.

Spite of her pick of ducal stud,
And of baronial link,
Spite of the swells nipped in the bud
By madness, death, and drink,

She made, as in another sphere,
A fav'rite of a crock,
And gave up, cheerfully, to beer,
What she refused to hock.

A helper in her father's pack,
No marquis in disguise,
But low-born groom, with sturdy back,
Found favour in her eyes.

And riding down the tranquil lanes,
She measured, marvelled, pitied,
Allowed him to describe his pains,
(*Aches*, of course, omitted),

Until he brought a formal suit,
And was accepted, too,
And sealed it with a chaste salute,
Half love, half Irish stew;

Prevailed on her to be his bride,
And, "unbeknown to Par,"
To have the knot securely tied
Before a Registrar.

The Countess wrote for all her rings,
And then renounced the girl;
You never heard such awful things
As said her Pa, the Earl.

The world, her parents, and the Church
(Per Reverend Ludolph Ram),
All left her bleating in the lurch,
A lost, strayed, stolen lamb.

Forgotten now of friends and foes,
She decks another sphere:
Makes beds, and empties slops, and goes
To fetch her Tom his beer.

And whether she be blest or curst,
Have badly done or well,
Have known the best of life or worst,
The Lord alone can tell.

But this I know, since she was wed,
Her ways have grown more meek,
Less tossing of her little head,
And much less damask cheek.

Her tongue's less sharp, less grim her brow,
Uncurled her haughty nose,
She frights no hapless tradesman now,
Nor rends her husband's clothes.

Indeed, she's found out, to her cost,
That if such schemes she plotted,
She'd find her eyes, if T were crossed,
Artistically dotted.

From which it might be urged that when
A Buck with Blood's allied,
The issue will be now and then
A cure at least for pride.

While those less willing to befriend
A union with the masses,
Might find that trouble *will* attend
A fusion of the classes.

One fact, it must be owned, is plain
Through the surrounding gloom—
A fitly of the purest strain
Affects the strongest groom.

THE MAN AT MUDIE'S.

LORD AND LADY BYRON.

AMONG the *causes celèbres* of the nineteenth century, by far the most celebrated will be one which never came before any court of law. In point of fact, it became not one "cause," but several—a series of "cross actions," in legal phraseology. Fifty years ago, speaking in round numbers, the suits "Arabella Lady Byron *v.* George Gordon Lord Byron," *et vice versâ*, furnished material for infinite gossip, and an endless series of critical disquisitions. The pleadings and counter-pleadings, the charges and counter-charges, the criminations and recriminations on both sides, though never reported by the short-hand writers of Westminster Hall, comprised a mass of materials which very speedily piled up a literary pyramid of considerable dimensions. And to this structure frequent additions were made. Every new poem that Lord Byron published—and he published many during the eight years that elapsed between his exile and his death—gave occasion for fresh outbreaks of criticism, gossip, and surmise. Each successive production, whether avowed or anonymous, was eagerly searched for "personal" revelations. Nor was the search vain. Whatever he wrote, Byron as a matter of course put into it a strong infusion of personality. He could not help it. Let his hero be wicked or vicious to any extent and in any direction, some traces of the Byronic lineaments were sure to be decipherable. And if the "noble poet" put in even one touch of his own private experiences, he was made responsible for the deeds, or misdeeds, of the central personage of his poem, and identified as saying, and doing, and thinking all that Manfred or Lara, that Cain or Don Juan may have been represented in his rapid and reckless verses as having said, or thought, or done.

When Lord Byron died, this source of gossip—to use a mild term—naturally dried up. But every now and then new springs were opened. When Moore, a staunch friend, but most unwise biographer, brought out his *Life and Letters of Lord Byron*, all the abysses of scandal were stirred to their depths—nobody was satisfied. The partizans—for it had become a party question—of Lord Byron, few of whom knew him except as a poet, and who had found in his poetry the thoughts that breathed and words that burned, were sorely vexed at finding the character of their idol in its moral, social, and financial aspects quietly given up as indefensible. On the other hand, the partizans of Lady Byron were desperately affronted at the bare suggestion of the idea that there might have been faults on both sides.

When other deaths occurred, when Ada—the "daughter of my house and heart," whose baptismal name, it is now worth recalling, was Augusta Ada—died, and afterwards, when Lady Byron herself died, in the amplitude of grace, and respect, and veneration from all who were privileged to know how the later years of her life were passed, it was thought that the time had come, or the obstacle had been removed, and that the public would be gratified by having the veil lifted at last, and the great secret disclosed.

For that there *was* a "great secret" had become a sort of article of faith in literary and extra-literary circles. "All that we know is 'Nothing has been known,'" seemed to be the motto for universal adoption. Ultimately the question passed into the future tense. Hereafter the truth would be revealed, and public curiosity satisfied. The last and most "promising" of these literary legacies seemed to become realizable when Lord Broughton died. "Hobhouse" had been Byron's earliest and most intimate friend. He accompanied him upon the journey through Spain and Greece, which inspired the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, and enabled their author to "wake and find himself famous." He had subsequently maintained a close intimacy with Lord Byron when in England; constantly corresponded with him, and sometimes visited him in Italy and elsewhere; wrote notes to his last cantos of *Childe Harold;* was the trusted adviser in his difficulties, and the *confidant* of all his secrets.

But when Lord Broughton died he left his papers covered with a seal, which is not to be broken until the first year of the 20th century! This is, of course, very tantalising; but it cannot be helped. When the seal is taken off the Broughton papers, Anno Domini 1900, who will care to know what light they may throw on the Byronic mystery? Interest in their secrets—if there is any secresy about them—very speedily evaporates. Who would now pay twopence to know the real name and true history of the "Man in the Iron Mask?" And even the discovery of an indisputable author of the *Junius Letters* would produce interest only among a very limited circle of literary antiquarians.

While the case of Byron *v.* Uxor, *et vice versâ*, has become in every sense of the term a *remanet* on *this* side of the Atlantic, we find the action pursued, the verdict given, a judgment pronounced, without delay or misgiving, on the other. Mrs. H. B. Stowe has favoured the world with what she calls the "true story of Lady Byron's life." It is told at vast length, and in the style that might be expected from the biographer of Uncle Tom, and so experienced a hand in the arts of amplification and sensationalism. One result, and that probably the one most desired, has certainly been attained. The story, whether true or not true, has undoubtedly created a sensation. It has attracted innumerable readers, elicited a huge mass of criticism, and obtained a certain measure of credence. When so much has been said and written already, we are not called upon to dilate at any length on so well worn a subject. Mrs. Stowe's "secret," the solitary kernel which she has enveloped in such a voluminous succession of husks, can be told in a few lines. Lord Byron, after proposing once to Miss Milbank and been rejected, "fell into the depths of a secret adulterous intrigue with a blood relation;" that he nevertheless made a second and successful proposal to the same lady, two years later; that on the wedding-day, when the carriage-door was shut on Lord Byron and his bride, a tragic scene occurred, in which the husband of an hour old broke "into a paroxysm of remorse and despair," confessed the possession of a guilty secret, and told his wife that she "had married a devil." The "guilty secret" was not, so far as we understand, revealed at the time, but the "hour of revelation" came, when "Lady Byron saw the full depth of the abyss of infamy which her marriage was expected to cover;" and then followed "two years" of "passionate convulsion," during which the outraged but sublimely silent wife was "with all her soul struggling to bring back her husband to his better self." Finally the struggle failed, in so far that husband and wife separated for ever after—a dramatic parting scene which Mrs. Stowe has put upon the stage for the first time; but that Lady Byron was able to exact the condition that when her lord left England, the "unhappy partner of his sins" should remain behind, and that "the ruinous intrigue should be given up."

This is the "story," hideous and "sensational" enough it must be confessed. Such as it is, it rests entirely upon Mrs. Stowe's bare assertion. Corroborative evidence there is none. All, with the single exception (perhaps) of Dr. Lushington, who knew anything about the truth of the case "of their own knowledge," are dead and gone. All documentary evidence is either burnt or put under seal for the next thirty years. And even Mrs. Stowe does not profess to know the true story of her own knowledge. She only reports in 1869 the impression left on her mind by some conversations held with Lady Byron in 1856. And this is all.

The way in which Mrs. Stowe shields her "story" from every risk of contradiction does credit to her skill as a sensation novel writer. It is very clever—in fact, much too clever. All the witnesses are skilfully put out of court. If Lady Byron never breathed a word of this horrible secret (except to Mrs. Stowe)—if she endured the presence of her husband's half-sister in social intercourse—if she enabled Lord Byron to write "Augusta is now with us"—if some months after their marriage she stayed with him on a visit to Col. and Mrs. Leigh—all this is set down as proofs of her saintly long-sufferance and sublime silence. And the same reply is ready when letters are published written in the fulness of confidence by Lady Byron to Lady Ann Barnard in 1818, shortly after the separation, or to Crabb Robinson in 1858, shortly before his own death, in which the sad story of her married life is told in considerable detail, but without one glimpse of the "secret" which we are now assured lay at the bottom of all. On the other hand, everything that Lord Byron himself wrote or said about the story in general or his half-sister in particular, is summarily quashed by the assertion that it is all nothing but lies and make-believes got up for the purpose of imposing a false tale upon the public, and in a sort of fiendish reliance on the "sublime silence" of Lady Byron. This explanation certainly makes a very heavy draft upon one's credulity. To believe it we must regard Lord Byron as possessing at once crime, cunning, and audacity to a superhuman degree. He must have been not only a monster of wickedness, but a psychological monster as well. To give but a singe instance, does it seem within the bounds of possibility that Lord Byron would have written the line—

"Nor most that the world might belie,"

in a poem addressed to Augusta Leigh, and with its marked reference to Lady Byron, if Mrs. Stowe's frightful story were based upon fact? And we must further believe that the author of the delusion kept it up with miraculous consistency in everything he wrote, in every word he uttered, for years together. Not long before he left Italy for Cephalonia a countryman of Mrs. Stowe's paid him a visit and exchanged conversation whereof he took notes, which, as usual, were incontinently published. Among these notes is one to the effect that Lord Byron quoted the Bible, and produced a copy which he said he read often, and that it had been given him by his sister Augusta, "who was a good woman."

We will add but one word more. The "story" was written by an American author for an American public, and was published in a New York periodical, *The Atlantic Monthly*. In its country the article would have served its purpose, achieved notoriety, sold the magazine, and done no harm. That an English periodical of the first-class should have given it simultaneous publicity on this side of the Atlantic can only be matter for much serious regret.

THE SPORTING MAN.

THE ST. LEGER.

HOWEVER gloomy and discouraging the prospects of the Turf may be considered by the generation which will recognize no great horse since The Australian, and few good men since Lord George, it is probable that few signs of its decay will be visible next week on the Town Moor. Meetings

may come and meetings may go, but Doncaster seems likely to run ont and train on, too, for ever. Amongst the melancholy procession of gate-money meeting, where the three-and-six-penny sweepstakes, with a pair of aluminium sugar-tongs added, forms the centrepiece of the programme, Ascot and Doncaster stand out in honourable relief, the two fixtures where four days real and equal sport may be confidently reckoned on. The added money at either of these legitimate gatherings would, if beaten out on the modern gold-leaf principle, furnish material for a dozen meetings of the modern stamp, and leave a residuum from which a popular and enterprising lessee might make something handsome. If Ascot be thought the more brilliant, for which it has to thank the Almanack, Doncaster may be considered a shade the more solid. With the supplementary attractions of the yearling sales, especially since they have been removed from the "dust heap" to the cool green paddock over against it, the Doncaster week must be considered the pleasantest the racing man enjoys throughout the year. Not even the moors the mangold can keep sportsmen from the Red House or the Rifle Butts when a St. Leger is to be decided; and, though some sad gaps in the ranks of its aristocratic supporters will be noticed with sorrow, there is no fear of the present anniversary not being as brilliantly and numerously attended as when the Spot's and the "Cornet's horse" ran a dead heat, or when "Blair Athol's" victory made the drenched Yorkshiremen shout themselves almost dry. There can be no doubt that the coming struggle for the Northern Blue Ribbon will be invested with a great, perhaps unusual, amount of interest: the close finish at Epsom, the subsequent performances of first and second, the alleged improvement in Drummer and Martyrdom, and the presence of a genuine Whitewall outsider, being sufficient to ensure a race with the element of that fine uncertainty about it which bookmakers love. It is possible that the quality of the competitors may not be comparable to that of West Australian and Gladiateur. But the question which I have seen asked, "Where would Pretender be?" with those celebrities, is more easily asked than answered, and admits of no possible reply which can have anything beyond prejudice for foundation. There can be no fair comparison of the powers of a past generation with those of the present. The time-test being allowed on all hands but those of Oriental sportsmen to be practically worthless, what possible means can exist for instituting a fair comparison between the merits of West Australian and Pretender? The former was tried, viâ Longbow, perhaps more highly than any horse that ever trod the turf; but he was beaten by Speed the Plough, as was Gladiateur by Bedminster. Pretender may not be an Eclipse, but there is no reason for degrading him to the level of a third-rater, because he only beat Pero Gomez by a head. Will the double winner add the Blue Ribbon of the North to his previous triumphs? is now the question of the hour; and we find that a somewh at brief reply to that question will exhaust all the space at our disposal, a fact we regret thé less as we know our readers will not tarry long over the plain joint we can provide when they see the dessert which is to follow. It is most likely on this occasion that "The Outsider" and ourselves will, if not row in the same boat, ride in the same saddle, for our firm opinion is that Pretender will achieve the triple crown. There appears to us no earthly reason why the position he held with Martyrdom and the Drummer at Newmarket, and with Pero Gomez at Epsom should be reversed. He is unquestionably a sounder and better constitutioned horse than Pero, who was distressed to death at Epsom, and still suffering from the effects of his "tying-up" at Ascot. His action will not be so well suited to the Town Moor as that of Pretender; she will not travel the distance with the same appetite. At the same time and in the same way we see nothing behind Sir Joseph Hawley's colours in the Derby which should pass them at Doncaster. Pero Gomez and the Duke of Beaufort were more disappointed than any two horses in the race, and we have always believed they finished second and *third*. The Drummer has failed to do what he has been asked with Formosa, and looks on the "Railroad to Ruin" with the breaks up. Thorwaldsen is at any price, and Martyrdom is also under a cloud; but well or ill we consider him pounds below the P.'s, besides having an infirmity which may destroy the hopes of his backers at any moment. To discuss the chances of such handicap form as Typhon, George Osbaldeston, Lord Hawthorn, and Co. would be a waste of time, and to sum up, the only danger which can possibly threaten the cracks is from the unknown Royal Oak, who is, we have reason to believe, a good horse. He will run untried; and though we do not imagine he will do all his trainer expects, he may be nearer the post at the finish than his enemies may care to see. However, we are pretty confident of PRETENDER'S success; and on mature consideration we shall endeavour to anticipate the verdict of the judge by placing Pero Gomez second and Duke of Beaufort third.

Turf Talk.

BY "THE OUTSIDER."

A PRELIMINARY address is a bore: no one cares to read it—so I shall not write one. Those of my readers who have taken the trouble to peruse my articles under the above heading for the last four years in the *Sporting Times* will not care to read my professions here; and those I address now for the first time must judge me by the future. Mr. Pecksniff's celebrated speech at the laying of the first stone of the Grammar School slightly altered, if not improved, shall, with every apology to Mr. Dickens, serve as my opening address. "My friends, my duty is to write about races and horses—not about myself; to write to the point—not scribble useless pages for writing's sake: to deal with owners of racehorses, handicappers, defaulters, and wire pullers—not language. I am very much affected—God bless you." The first number of a paper has always so many articles ready for its pages, that I feel bound to allow my "Turf Talk" this week to be of the shortest (I hope I may add of the sweetest) description—in fact, it will hardly be "Turf Talk" at all, for, beyond reviewing the claims of the competitors for the three or four principal races at Doncaster, it will be but "small" talk, indeed, although, I trust, remunerative.

The races at Doncaster I propose to dilate on are the Champagne Stakes, the Great Yorkshire Handicap, and the St. Leger; and if I succeed in foreshadowing the winners of all three, it will, or should be, a feast large enough for the keenest appetite.

The field for the St. Leger will probably be larger than was anticipated a week ago, as the rain has come to the rescue of two or three cripples, who will now, in all probability, see the post.

However, even with that accession of strength, I think no more than fifteen at the outside will answer Mr. McGeorge's call, and of that number eight will run without the ghost of a chance of success. Those eight may be enumerated as follows:—George Osbaldeston, Arlington, Starter, Brennus, Conrad, Ladas, Dunbar, and Crocus. In addition to this hopeless lot, Mr. Saville will probably run one to make the running for Ryshworth, and Mr. Johnstone may run one, or even two, to do a similar service for Pretender. This leaves me seven to deal with—viz., Pretender, Pero Gomez, The Drummer, Martyrdom, Ryshworth, Royal Oak, and Duke of Beaufort; and I will take them in their order.

Pretender having won the Two Thousand Guineas "hands down," added the Derby to his Newmarket wreath, and he has since won the Stockton St. Leger cleverly, if not easily. It seems difficult to suppose that any horse he has previously vanquished can turn the tables on him next week. If they have improved, so has he; and no horse he has to meet is so admirably fitted for the course as he is. For the last twenty-five years no second at Epsom has ever won at Doncaster; and if Pretender is to be beaten it will not be by Pero Gomez—a horse that both his *owner* and *trainer* made no secret of before the Derby they had tried *not to stay*. Which was tiring more at the finish at Epsom?—Why, Pero Gomez. Which was the more distressed after the race?—Why, Pero Gomez. At the lower end of the Stand where I stood, Pretender was about a neck before Pero Gomez, and that distance was only changed into a head at the winning-post. So much for all the reports in the papers to the contrary. Pero Gomez has always run like what his owner and trainer publicly said he was—a non-stayer; and although Sir Joseph and Porter would probably have no objection to eat their own words, I do not think Wednesday's race will give them an opportunity of doing so. To return to Pretender. His race at Stockton has been quoted against him by his enemies; why I can't imagine. The race was run for a half-mile only, and even at that distance he cut down one of the fastest milers out—viz., Fichu. He won cleverly too, and Islam then was supposed by his party to be a pretty good one, as they put down the pieces pretty freely, in the face of his meeting the Derby winner at 10 lbs. Since Stockton Islam has gone to the bad, but he never was a horse to run up to his form more than once in six weeks, so that his subsequent defeats do not detract from Pretender's victory over him. Since the Derby, Pretender has been neither sick nor sorry for an hour, much less for a day, and he will come to the post next Wednesday with one of Tom Dawson's finest polishes on, and trained to an hour! The horse that beats him will win the St. Leger, but I am convinced if he is to be beaten it will not be by any horse he has met this year. Pero Gomez I have almost disposed of in writing of Pretender. His two performances since the Derby have consisted in being well beaten by that poor cripple Martyrdom at Ascot at a difference of 6 lbs. in the Prince of Wales's stakes, and winning the Ascot Derby from a beauty like Consul by a length, when Consul was not backed. Apart from the certainty in my own mind that the horse cannot stay, I doubt his legs standing, after the way in which he hobbled off the course at Ascot. I have every reason to hope Sir Joseph will not be successful, as he has never yet wiped out (as far as I know) his cowardly and ungentlemanly protest against Pretender receiving the Derby Stakes, by the only way a gentleman should have done—viz., a full and ample apology to Mr. Johnstone. I also believe Sir Joseph has little or nothing on his horse, and I shall be surprised, therefore, if Pero Gomez gets nearer than third. I wrote after the Derby that I believed he would never get so near to Pretender again, neither do I believe he will. The Drummer has within the last few days gone back in the quotations, not by reason of his being amiss, but simply from the amount of public money that has been put on Pero Gomez. Why Mr. Graham should have thrown away the great chance he had of winning the Goodwood Cup by not starting The Drummer I do not know. As to thinking he could win the St. Leger as long as the first two in the Derby kept well, why, it was absurd. The Drummer is a fair handicap horse, a good stayer, without any speed. At the upper end of the Stand at Epsom he led by three parts of a length, but he could not race with Pretender and Pero Gomez when they got to his head, and he fell back at every stride. Is a quarter of a mile on a flat course to turn the tables?—I think not; and if The Drummer gets fourth, Mr. Graham ought to think himself a lucky man. Had not The Duke of Beaufort been knocked into a cocked hat in the Derby he would have finished before The Drummer, and he *will* do so if he reaches the post well at Doncaster. A horse that failed to win the Lincoln Handicap with 6 st. on his back, that failed to win the City and Suburban with 6 st. 2 lbs., that won the Metropolitan with 6 st. 9 lbs. when his only two competitors worth their salt were out of the race, one being amiss and the other by throwing a plate, a horse that was nowhere in the Two Thousand Guineas, only third in the Derby in a slowly run race, and could only beat Ryshworth by a head at Paris, is not the sort of horse to take 5 to 1 about for the St. Leger, and he will see double that price before the flag falls, or I am much mistaken. Martyrdom is a horse very difficult to deal with: he is always going to win a big race but never does, and only on one occasion this year, when we were not told he was going to win, did he succeed in getting his head in first. The tactics of his party are certainly not commendable; every dodge to drive their horses back in the betting is resorted to by the wire pullers of Blos's stable, and I cannot conceive a more unpopular victory than Martyrdom's would be if he won the St. Leger. Having seen 6 to 1, he has since gone back, and now figures at 10 to 1. The

horse's only good performance this year was in the Six Mile Handicap at Epsom, and on that form he should run into a place; but how he can be expected to finish before Pretender, who has twice fairly lost him, I cannot imagine. Looking at the horse's doubtful hocks, his still more doubtful position in the market, and the stable dodges, I think Martyrdom is best left alone; but should he see the post all right, he will finish before Mr. Graham's horse.

Ryshworth must give way to Pero Gomez, and although he may make a race of it with The Drummer, I do not think he will in any way interfere with the winner, and at the present time the market says he has gone wrong altogether.

The Duke of Beaufort is, I believe, an improving horse. It is true he was nowhere in the Guineas, and but fourth in the Derby; but at Newmarket something was clearly wrong with him, and at Epsom he would have been second or third if he had not been run into by Thorwaldsen. Mr. Brayley's horse was the only horse that suffered by the scrimmage at Epsom; Pero Gomez was not *interfered with in any way*, and I fully expect to see Sir Joseph finish second best to Mr. Brayley next week. As a place investment, he is, in my opinion, the best horse in the race, and I believe is the only animal of those who have yet met Pretender that has any chance of defeating him.

Royal Oak is John Scott's annual St. Leger mystery. Last year he gave us Viscount, and having won a lot of trumpery races with old horses weighted as two-year-olds, he has managed to get Royal Oak very forward in the quotations. I know nothing of the horse, either for, or against him, but John Scott has of late years cried "Wolf!" so often, I cannot but advise caution in dealing with the son of the moderate Gamester.

Pretender's stable companions, Thorwaldsen and Lord Hawthorn, would both be formidable competitors, with the son of Adventurer out of the way, but the market is so much against them I dare not advise either being backed. Thorwaldsen showed by his neck defeat of Blue Gown at Ascot what a good one he was, and had he not cut it when called upon, Brigantine would have won no Ascot Cup.

Lord Hawthorn can race when wanted, but although he might have won the Great Yorkshire Stakes, he could not have won with much to spare, and that form is hardly good enough to win the St. Leger.

I now come to a mysterious outsider, Royal Head—better known as Brother to Ostregor; he has never yet run, but a little bird has whispered to me he is a magnificent horse, and a most splendid mover. He is in the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire, at 5st. 12lb. and 6st. 2lb., and he may be reserved to land those two events, but should he start for the St. Leger no one should allow him to run without having a saving stake on him. The only horses, then, I take it, that can beat Pretender are Duke of Beaufort, Royal Oak, Royal Head, and his stable companions, Thorwaldsen and Lord Hawthorn. Royal Oak and Royal Head I discard, as their private reputations may be exaggerated. I throw over his stable companions, because I believe one is not up to the mark and the other amiss, but should Thorwaldsen come well to the post, and any mistake occur with the favourite, he will be very handy. This leaves me The Duke of Beaufort, but although a good place investment, I do not think him capable of lowering the colours of

PRETENDER;

but I shall expect to see him run a good second to the Derby winner. Pero Gomez or anything else may be third.

Since writing the above, the Drummer has been knocked out to his proper price, 12 to 1. I do not think the worse or the better of him on that account. Typhon has taken Ryshworth's place in the betting, the latter having gone amiss; and I think Typhon will also take his place in the race, and perhaps improve on it by a length.

Mr. Merry has the Champagne Stakes at his feet, with either of his two Sunshine or Sunlight, and Lord Zetland's horse, Géant des Batailles will beat Paul Jones and Wildbad, and win the Great Yorkshire Handicap.

I shall have a great deal to say next week about the Autumn Handicaps, for which the weights were known everywhere *a week before* they appeared in the Calendar.

Such a disgraceful circumstance calls for an immediate explanation from the authorities, and they ought to be compelled to give one.

SNIFFS FROM THE BRINY.

O SUNLIT sea, at last
Upon thy tranquil breast—
The weary struggle past—
My spirit has found rest.

The yearning heart forgets
For what, for whom it sighed;
Complaints, desires, regrets
Float idly down the tide.

Or if one mem'ry shrouds
The peace that is in me,—
As lightly-passing clouds
Obscure the deep, calm, sea;

Or as the short-lived spray
Breaks on the careless sand—
'Tis that I cannot pay
My reck'ning at the "Grand."

Brighton. THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

(To whom it is requested that no communication may be addressed.)

IN THE TURNIPS.

SAVE what a hunting friend of mine happily terms the "glorious 1st of November," when we once more pull on the leathers and don the scarlet—or that day of rejoicing for those whom Fate allows to participate in its pleasures, the 12th of August—there is no more enjoyable time during the year than when we sally forth, gun in hand, to the turnips. Take the greatest amount of pleasure given to the greatest number, and the 1st of September may fairly vie with either date named; assuredly, no living thing is so universally pursued as the partridge. The great despise him not; yet he is within reach of those of moderate means, and many a professional man, who would as much think of an expedition to Algeria as the moors or the shires, has friends with whom he can get a little partridge shooting for the small outlay of a railway fare. Hence a bad partridge year causes more universal disappointment than any failure, save that of a public favourite in a great race. We much fear this disappointment will be general in the present season. From north and south, east and west, reports are the same: small, weak coveys, and pairs of barren birds, or perhaps, more properly speaking, birds whose nests or broods have been destroyed. The cover, also, which a few weeks ago promised so well, is far from carrying out the expectations then entertained. The late dry weather has cooked the turnips, though they are anything but well done. The mangold has not fulfilled its mission, and stubbles in these days are not. Of course there are exceptions, and one pretty good day is reported from Suffolk, where cover was plentiful. Devonshire is also said to have escaped better than most countries in both respects. There are doubtless many backward coveys, or "cheepers," which of course remain untouched at present. Those who have a moderate supply of turnips or other cover will get a little shooting with these ere long. Theories out of number are propounded to account for the shortcoming as to birds: in my opinion, the one great cause is the large number of old ones left over from last season. This could not be avoided, and in many manors there was no way of thinning them, save driving, a custom which I believe is becoming only too fashionable. When a man will single his birds, it certainly takes more shooting than any other way. But will not a large proportion of men, should a few misses in succession ruffle their temper, be guilty of letting into the "brown of 'em" as they come over? It is not everyone who is to be trusted under such circumstances. I quarrel with no man's fancy: let those who like to throw aside all the beauty of the sport, and go in for mere shooting during a few days in the season, by all means do so. He has only to consult his own taste in the matter. One piece of advice—if you join a large party, with beaters waking up the birds, shoot as quickly as you can, and don't be particular as to claiming any of the slain that may fall near you. Rely on it, others will do the same, as modesty is not the ruling power on these occasions. I have known a man who certainly showed no want of confidence in laying claim to a fair bag in this way when between good shots; probably, single-handed he would not have had a feather to show. Another I could name returned highly satisfied with his day's work, whose loader, being so instructed for the general welfare, put nothing more deadly than powder into his barrels. It is astonishing what satisfaction some men derive from merely letting off their piece more or less in the direction of the birds.

These scrambling, hurry-scurry days of large parties and great slaughter are not to my taste. One friend—a thorough sportsman who knows what he is about—a brace of good dogs, and a marker or two that will make no mistake, are nearer my realisation of what partridge shooting should be—old-fashioned notions, it is true, but perhaps none the worse for that. "All the use of dogs is to put you out of temper," said a bag-loving friend the other day. I do not agree with him—at least, if a man have good dogs; bad ones are certainly worse than nothing. The same authority assured me that "partridges seemed changed in their nature, and did not lie to dogs so well as formerly." In this there may be some truth, as all know how quickly game of every description adapts itself to altered circumstances. Stubbles are gone in most countries, turnips are drilled, giving the birds opportunities to run, of which they avail themselves to an immoderate extent. Hedgerows are fast disappearing, and the extra work done in the fields keeps them ever on the *qui vive*. At the same time, good dogs may be shot over, and show sport even yet, provided you can get them; but they are few and far between. Principally they are found in the hands of those old-fashioned sportsmen who have never fallen into the present system, and who are as loath to part with them as the Arab with his mare. One such it is my privilege to know, and a day in his turnips is a thing to be remembered for life. He is a good preserver, without caring for that overcrowding of game seen on some manors. By the way, anent this hangs a tale. The squire took an orphan boy into his service, from the New Forest, where, perhaps, as desperate a race of poachers as any in England are nourished. Henry (for so the youngster was called), for some cause, went out with his master during the breeding season, when they disturbed a brooding hen so roughly that the old gentleman was afraid she would forsake her nest. In the afternoon Henry was started with strict injunctions to approach quietly, and if possible see whether she had returned. The youngster came back jubilant, and being asked if she was in, replied with a grin, "Ees, master, I made sure of her this time," pulling the dead bird from his pocket. The licking he received was something to be respected and remembered; and Henry from that day forth became as good a legitimate sportsman as he had been an arrant poacher previously, and was for some years the squire's right-hand man in all sporting matters. But let us adjourn to the Old Grange some fine September morning, where a jovial welcome awaits us as we ride up to the door, half hidden in ivy, jasmine, and monthly roses. There is the old man himself, hale and hearty, to give us the grasp of friendship, while from behind the shrubs on the left emerges the aforesaid Henry with his master's gun and a brace of pointers,—full-sized, powerful dogs they are, broad-headed and with deep jowls; liver-coloured and white, but thickly mottled over the neck and legs like old-fashioned harriers. At the same time, a groom brings round a black cob, short-legged and powerful as a dray-horse, whose small head, full eye, pricked ear, and well-laid shoulder tell unmistakably of an aristocratic descent. "Now, Kate," shouts the squire, and the summons is responded to by a tall, fair girl, her hair falling in a cataract of gold over her shoulders, and her eyes of the deep blue that seems to merge into violet beneath the long, dark lashes as you gaze on them, while the consciousness of meeting strangers throws a glow over her fair face, that makes the lingering roses look withered and sickly in comparison.

A moment after she is lifted into the black's saddle, and as she turns his head towards the avenue, the squire proudly remarks,

"Now, gentlemen, you will have the best

brace of dogs and the best marker in the county to-day, and if we don't make a bag it's our own fault. Though I say so, Kate can give every man living three pair of spectacles, and beat him easily when birds have to be marked."

While he speaks she has already put the cob into a trot, and, leaping a low field gate without ceremony, is away to her post by a clump of bushes on the high ground. Meantime we turn through another gate into some clover heads. One wave of the squire's hand, and away go the dogs with a good raking stride and heads up, quartering their ground beautifully. Not a sound is heard; neither word nor whistle is required; a signal is enough for them.

"There is a picture!" whispers the old man as Don suddenly becomes cataleptic, and stands with raised foot and outstretched neck, still as a block of marble, while Juno, at sixty yards distance, backs his point and becomes rigid as her companion. "There is a picture!" again whispers he, quietly taking a pinch of snuff at the same time; and observing some eagerness on our part, he continues—"No hurry; they will stand for a week. What is a dozen beaters compared to that, eh? But now let us walk up on each side, and get the birds between Don and ourselves; we shall then break them."

Quietly the squire waits as they rise, until our shots are expended, and then knocks down the old birds, both dogs immediately disappearing in the clover heads. Henry, who has watched proceedings from the top of the gate, now comes forward and says the birds are gone right on our line of beat. So instead of following them, it is decided to work out the covert, which is done without success.

As we leave the field, Kate's handkerchief signals us towards her, and coming up we find she has marked down the whole "covey." "One bird," says she, "is about ten yards this side of the elder stem in the wide edge; a brace pitched just beyond in the turnips to the right of the bare patch, while the body of the covey went over the brow and out of my sight; but as they spread their wings, I expect you will find them twenty or thirty yards beyond, in a direct line with that old thorn bush and the oak tree at the edge of the cover. Mr. Snapshot's bird towered and fell this side of the gap leading into the wheat stubble."

Having received these instructions, we again set forward, find the towered bird is recovered just in front of Juno's nose, who has stood him; the one in the hedge routed out and slaughtered; the brace beyond, one handsomely killed and the other winged, which latter, as there is no fear of spoiling him, Don is allowed to retrieve. Then the rest of the covey is accounted for, and numerous others brought to hand in the same masterly way, when a light spring cart makes its appearance with a load composed of cold grouse pie, Bass, sherry, and other things supposed to be necessary for restoring our expended energy. Don and Juno are replaced by Carlo and Dash, the very moral of the others, and everything is ready for a fresh start after luncheon. Reader! how like you a morning with the old squire?

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ANNUAL REPORT AND QUINQUENNIAL LIFE INVESTIGATION.

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LIFE BRANCH,

That 565 Policies had been completed and issued, insuring the sum of	£235,246
Yielding in New Premiums	6,697
That there was added to the Life Fund a sum equal to 69 per cent. of the net premiums, viz.	25,313
Increasing that Fund from £84,840 to..	110,153

IN THE
FIRE BRANCH,

That the Premiums for 1868, after deducting re-insurances, amounted to £122,129, being an increase of £18,141 on the net income of 1867.

A portion of the balance at the disposal of the Shareholders was appropriated in payment of a Dividend of 7 per cent.

The Fire Reserve Fund was increased to £80,000 by the addition of £4,571.

And the sum of £3,133 was carried forward to next year's Accounts.

A Bonus averaging 40 per cent. of the Premiums paid was declared to holders of ordinary participating Life Policies.

THE INCOME OF THE COMPANY was shown to be £217,976, and THE FUNDS IN HAND £433,464.

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